

VZCZCXRO7111
PP RUEHCI
DE RUEHKA #2185 1090035
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 190035Z APR 06
FM AMEMBASSY DHAKA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7069
INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1080
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2450
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9045
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 8497
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 7399
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1428
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DHAKA 002185

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BG](#)

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION SIT-IN AT PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE COULD
TURN VIOLENT

¶1. (SBU) The Awami League-led opposition alliance is pressing forward with plans to hold on April 19 a sit-in in front of the Prime Minister's Office from 1100 to 1300 local. Their declared objective is to trap Prime Minister Khaleda Zia inside her office in support of their demands for electoral and caretaker government reforms.

¶2. (SBU) In response, police have announced a 24-hour ban effective midnight April 18 on any rally or demonstration around the PMO and the BDG secretariat. Similar bans have proved effective in the past. Local media report some arrests of Awami League activists in Dhaka, but there have been the arbitrary detention of thousands of young men arriving from out of town, as we have seen before.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: The sit-in could spark the biggest political violence in Dhaka since the Awami League demonstrations in April 2004 mounted to force the BDG to quit office by the end of the month. While neither BNP nor the AL is known for restraint, it is unclear how actively they will court confrontation. If the PM holds to her normal schedule of arriving at the office around noon, her path should take her directly through the demonstrators. If the Awami League limits the sit-in to two hours and then disperses, conflict might be minimized. We will monitor and report.
BUTENIS